

In response to the restriction requirement, the Applicants hereby elects Group I. Claims 1-24, 38-45, and 49-53 are now presented for examination.

The election of Group I in response to the restriction requirement is not a narrowing claim amendment, and should not be interpreted to limit the scope of the pending claims or the range of permissible equivalents.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if such would advance the prosecution of the Application.

Election of Species Requirement

In this Office Action, the Examiner also stated that the Application "contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:"

- A. Blind systems – Fig. 1; Fig. 2; Fig. 3, Fig. 4, Fig. 5; Fig. 7; Fig. 23; Fig. 27
- B. Take-up systems – Fig. 9; Fig. 12a,b
- C. Brake systems – Fig. 15; Fig. 16; Fig. 19, Fig. 22
- D. Counterbalance system – Fig. 25; Fig. 26
- E. Bottom rail weight – Fig. 29; Fig. 30.

The Applicant would like to elect the species shown in FIGURES 14 and 15. The Applicant notes that FIGURES 14 and 15 are not listed in the species identified in the Office Action. However, FIGURES 14 and 15 should be included in the "Take-up systems" species. For example, FIGURES 14 and 15 are described with FIGURES 12A, 12B, and 13 as "a balancing adjustment device configured to allow the consumer to adjust the balance of forces and/or performance of the drive actuator (e.g., weighting, resistance, spring tension, friction, etc.)" (see Specification at p. 17, lines 16-19.

During a telephone conference with the Examiner on January 14, 2002, the Examiner instructed counsel for the Applicants to identify the Figures that show the species to be elected along with the species (as recited by the Examiner in the Office Action) that should have included those Figures.

The Examiner also stated that the "Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added."

Claims 12-18, 50-52, 54, 58, 60-65 and 67 read on the species the Examiner identified as "Take-up Systems," which the applicant contends to also include FIGURES 14 and 15.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 1/17/02

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